

**United States Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management**

**Decision
Categorical Exclusion
DOI-BLM-CO-S010-2014-0045-CX**

September 2014

TOPAZ VENT MODIFICATION

Location:

T44N, R18W, Sec 15, SE¼NE ¼

Tres Rios Field Office
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DECISION

Categorical Exclusion

DOI-BLM-CO-S010-2014-045-CX

Topaz Existing Vent Modification

Decision:

I authorize a single existing vent hole and its ancillary facilities, currently covered by notice COC-70791 to be incorporated under the mine plan for the Topaz Mine (COC-52079). All existing conditions of approval and abandonment continue to apply. COC-70791 will be closed out.

The decision does not authorize any new activity or production at the Topaz Mine, which is presently idle.

Authorities:

The Proposed Action is categorically excluded from further documentation under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in accordance with:

- 1) H 1790 Appendix 4 F #7 "Approval of minor modifications to or minor variances from activities described in an approved exploration plan for leasable, salable, and locatable minerals".

Compliance and Monitoring:

The site will be inspected as a regular part of inspecting the Topaz mine.

Terms / Conditions / Stipulations:

Conditions from the original notice (COC-70791) apply. Weeds will be controlled as part of the weed control program for the Topaz mine. The vent will be abandoned at the same time as other vents that are part of the Topaz mine.

PLAN CONFORMANCE AND CONSISTENCY:

The proposed action and alternatives have been reviewed and found to be in conformance with one or more of the following BLM Land Use Plans and the associated decision(s):

Land Use Plan Name: San Juan-San Miguel RMP Date Approved/Amended: 1985

The proposed action is in conformance with the applicable LUP because it is specifically provided for in the following LUP decision(s): The proposed project is in emphasis areas E and A, at a mine that was in operation at the time the plan was approved. Emphasis area A's minerals guidance says: "Allow mineral development in all areas not withdrawn from entry. Provide Protective Stipulation to limit impacts to livestock improvements or management practices." Emphasis area E's minerals guidance states: "Allow mineral development on all

areas not specifically excluded from development. Provide protective stipulations to limit impacts to other resource values... Continue approved operations of 4500 acres of hard rock mining under 43 CFR 3809 regulations.”

Rationale for Decision:

This decision is a paperwork exercise that moves the administration of a vent constructed under a notice in 2006 to an approved plan of operation, for which it is already bonded. It represents the addition of <0.1 acres of disturbance to the existing plan, but no new disturbance on the ground. If this action were not approved, the same amount of disturbance would still be present. Archeological clearances were done, and there are no issues with plants, wildlife, or other resources, because no additional disturbance is being authorized. This action also makes the BLM’s mine plan consistent with the mine plan on file with the DRMS (M-1980-055-HR) which already incorporates this vent. This decision does not authorize any new production or activities at either the Sunday or Topaz mines, other than the inclusion of this existing vent under the Topaz plan.

Protest/Appeal Language:

Within 30 days of the receipt of this decision, the public has the right of appeal to the Interior Board of Land Appeals, Office of the Secretary, in accordance with the regulations at 43 CFR 4.400.



Connie Clementson
Field Manager
Tres Rios Field Office

9.25.14

Date

Attachments: Categorical Exclusion Review